(vi) Replacement of old X-Ray machines and installation of new colour X-Ray machines wherever necessary so as to ensure that atleast two X-ray machines are available at every point; and

(vii) Modernisation and upgradation of security related technological set up of the airports is being done in a phased manner.

Involvement of Air Travel Agents in Hijacking

448. SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of air travel agents have been found involved in the recent case of hijacking and abduction of Indian Airlines aircraft;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the names of those travel agencies;

(c) whether any further inquiry regarding their business with Indian Airlines and Air India is being carried out;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (e) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is conducting an investigation into the criminal case registered against the hijacking. The investigation is yet to be completed.

Expansion of Air Services in Punjab

449. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to connect more cities of Punjab with airways;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether State Government has proposed to give free land in this regard; and

(e) the action taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) Operators are free to connect any routes/places in their commercial judgement subject to compliance with the Route Dispersal Guidelines which provide for certain minimum operations in specified category of routes.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir, State Government of Punjab has allotted land free of cost to Airports Authority of India (AAI) for the development of Amritsar Airport to International Airport standards. The upgradation of Amritsar Airport would be undertaken in phases consistent with traffic requirements.

Losses in IA and AI

450. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that both Indian Airlines and Air India have been making sustained losses for the last three to four years;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there have been increasing complaints about the poor quality of the product being offered by these two airlines; and

(c) if so, what action Government is taking in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) While Indian Airlines has earned profits in the last three years, Air India incurred losses during the last four years.

(b) and (c) In the case of Indian Airlines there is a decline in the number of complaints received in the year 1999 as compared to the year 1998. Several steps are being taken by Air India to improve the product such as (i) separate check-in counters for all class passengers; (ii) facility of tele check-in for first class passengers; (iii) facility of pre-selecting a seat; (iv) facility of through check-on code-share flights; (v) facility of worldwide baggage tracing service;